



## Brighton Catholic Parishes News

# St James & St Joan of Arc



14th SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME. Year A

5th July 2020

## Fr Martin has yielded his message to the Archbishop This Week

Dear Parishioners of St Joan of Arc and St James,

My prayerful greetings to you all during these challenging times.

I know that many of you over recent months have been looking to the future directions of your Parishes. I write to you today to share some exciting news that I hope will bring direction to your thoughts and discussions.

Your Parishes, and other parishes that surround you, have been well served over many decades by good pastors and lay leaders who have faithfully ministered in your communities. As you may be aware, a number of parishes in the Bayside area of the Archdiocese are currently being managed by priests who are on a temporary placement, or who have already reached the retiring age for clergy of seventy-five years.

In looking to how we address this reality, rather than seeing it as something problematic, we are presented with an excellent opportunity to imagine new ways to reinvigorate the mission of the Gospel into the region.

Consideration and planning must be towards building vibrant parishes, that are well-equipped for the ongoing pastoral outreach and spreading of the Good News of Jesus Christ to the people of your neighbourhoods. This is a future that is filled with hope and vitality, and one that I know we all wish to share in.

In looking at the overall needs of the Archdiocese in its local faith communities, there is clearly a need for extensive planning, consultation and reform. We are currently working to establish processes to achieve this across the Archdiocese over the next few years. Nonetheless, some decisions need to be made now to ensure that the ongoing spiritual and pastoral needs of Catholics are being met in areas such as yours.

One of the challenges that we face as an Archdiocese is that we have a limited number of priests available to allocate across our two hundred and ten parishes. Many of the parishes in the inner parts of Melbourne are very small, which is a reflection of past historical priorities, while others in the growing part of the city are quite extensive. For example, according to the latest Australian census there were 2,200 Catholics living in the parish of Brighton, while the parish of Craigieburn, an outer Northern suburb, had 24,000 Catholics.

These numbers in no way diminish the living value and legacy of each individual community, but call for a particular and localised way to meet the needs of each community. The Parishes of St Joan of Arc and St James now need the stability of a Parish Priest and leadership team in the longer term to enable them to continue to provide effective evangelising, pastoral planning and care. Parishes also need to be resourced to ensure effective administration, especially with employment, safeguarding and financial compliance obligations. The neighbouring parishes of Hampton, Sandringham and Ricketts Point are all in a similar situation.

With a view to meeting the needs of Catholics across the broader region I have asked Fr David Cartwright, currently Parish Priest of Moreland and Fr Dean Mathieson, currently Administrator of Dandenong North, to work together as Priests in solidum across the Parishes of St Joan of Arc, St James, St Mary's Hampton, Sacred Heart Sandringham and Nazareth Parish Ricketts Point. Fr Vittorio Ricciardi, Parish Priest of Immaculate Heart of Mary Hampton East, and Fr Ian Ranson, Parish Priest of St Finbar's Brighton East, will remain in their particular appointments, but have also expressed their willingness to work with this collaborative missionfocused endeavour.

Under the in solidum model, the pastoral care of a parish, or several parishes, is entrusted to several priests. The priests each enjoy the stability of Office of a Parish Priest and have the duties and functions of a Parish Priest. One of them is designated Moderator of the pastoral action of the parish. The Moderator is the juridical representative of the parish and is answerable to the diocesan bishop.

I am very grateful that Fr David Cartwright has accepted the role of Moderator.

What is being put in place is a new way of expressing the mission of the Church in these parishes of the Archdiocese. It is a new way of collaboration between faith communities and clergy working together to meet the spiritual and pastoral needs of the Catholics of the area. Fr David and Fr Dean are aware that each of the Parishes has its own identity and history and they intend to work with them to form ongoing vibrant and viable faith communities that will build on those individual stories.

I am sure you would want to join me in thanking Fr Martin Dixon for his generous, wise and energetic leadership over the past ten years at St Joan's and past four years at St James. I have accepted Fr Martin's resignation from the Parishes of St Joan of Arc and St James effective Wednesday 5 August 2020.

Fr David and Fr Dean will commence on this date and will be working with each of the communities over the first 3 months in order to establish a plan for the close collaboration of all involved. I encourage you as parishioners and leaders of St Joan of Arc and St James to work with Fr David and Fr Dean and the leadership of the other parishes that will form part of this endeavour, to ensure that the stories of each of the communities stays alive and thrives into the future.

I wish all the parishes involved in this bold new venture every blessing of the Lord, as you come together to walk this journey of faith. May our Blessed Mother accompany you on the journey.

With every grace and blessing, I remain, yours sincerely in Christ Jesus,  
Most Rev Peter A Comensoli Archbishop of Melbourne.

## READINGS & REFLECTION



Today, we ask the Lord to be with us and hear our prayers on this, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday, a day where we are called to celebrate the gifts that Indigenous people bring to the Catholic Church in Australia.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Brighton Catholic Parish acknowledges the Boonwurrung people, I would also like to pay respect to the elders past and present of the Kulin nation, the Traditional Owners who have walked upon and cared for this land for thousands of years. We acknowledge the continued deep spiritual attachment and relationship of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to this country and commit ourselves to the ongoing journey of Reconciliation.

## OPENING PRAYER

Father, Lord of heaven and earth, by whose gracious will the mysteries of the kingdom are revealed to the little children, Make us learn from your Son humility of heart And may we find refreshment and rest.

## FIRST READING:

**Zec 9:9-10**

A reading from the prophet Zechariah

*See how humbly your king comes to you!*

The Lord says this:

‘Rejoice heart and soul, daughter of Zion!  
Shout with gladness, daughter of Jerusalem!  
See now, your king comes to you;  
he is victorious, he is triumphant,  
humble and riding on a donkey,  
on a colt, the foal of a donkey.  
He will banish chariots from Ephraim  
and horses from Jerusalem;  
the bow of war will be banished.  
He will proclaim peace for the nations.  
His empire shall stretch from sea to sea,  
from the River to the ends of the earth.’

## RESPONSORIAL PSALM

(R.) I will praise your name for ever,  
my king and my God.

1. I will give you glory, O God my King,  
I will bless your name for ever.  
I will bless you day after day  
and praise your name for ever. (R.)
2. The Lord is kind and full of compassion,  
slow to anger, abounding in love.  
How good is the Lord to all,  
compassionate to all his creatures. (R.)
3. All your creatures shall thank you, O Lord,  
and your friends shall repeat their blessing.  
They shall speak of the glory of your reign  
and declare your might, O God. (R.)
4. The Lord is faithful in all his words  
and loving in all his deeds.  
The Lord supports all who fall  
and raises all who are bowed down. (R.)

## SECOND READING:

**Rom 8:9.11-13**

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

*If by the Spirit you put an end to the misdeeds of the body,  
you will live.*

Your interests are not in the unspiritual, but in the spiritual, since the Spirit of God has made his home in you. In fact, unless you possessed the Spirit of Christ you would not belong to him, and if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, then he who raised Jesus from the dead will give life to your own mortal bodies through his Spirit living in you.

So then, my brothers, there is no necessity for us to obey our unspiritual selves or to live unspiritual lives. If you do live in that way, you are doomed to die; but if by the Spirit you put an end to the misdeeds of the body you will live.

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!  
Blessed are you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth;  
You have revealed to little ones the mysteries of the kingdom.  
Alleluia!

## GOSPEL:

**Mt 11:25-30**

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

*I am gentle and humble of heart.*

Jesus exclaimed, ‘I bless you, Father, Lord of heaven and of earth, for hiding these things from the learned and the clever and revealing them to mere children. Yes, Father, for that is what it pleased you to do. Everything has been entrusted to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, just as no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

‘Come to me, all you who labour and are overburdened, and I will give you rest. Shoulder my yoke and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. Yes, my yoke is easy and my burden light.’

## **HOMILY- Richard Leonard**

Before I said my first Mass an old priest gave me two great pieces of advice.

'You know when the congregation is filled with optimists. After a long series of announcements at the end of Mass and then you say, "and finally..." people take out their car keys!'

The second was, 'Never underestimate the burdens people bring with them into the church. Often we have little idea of the difficulties and pain our parishioners will be carrying.'

I have no idea what you have brought with you to Mass today. I can only imagine the anxiety and burden some of you are carrying. Whatever it is, Jesus invites you to let go of it, if only for a while, and be at peace.

Now all this 'come and rest a while' talk can be very pious and not sound all that in touch with reality.

Today's Gospel, however, came from the community of the Apostle Matthew and was written in Jerusalem about 45 years after Jesus' death. We know that this community experienced intense suffering and heavy burdens.

They had been expelled from the Synagogue and were being martyred for their faith in Jesus Christ.

No wonder they held so strongly to the words, 'Come to me all you who are weary and heavy burdened and I will give you rest.' And they found consolation in Jesus' example, 'take my yoke upon you and learn from me for I am gentle and humble in heart.'

Since the first century, however, Christianity has been guilty of trying to spiritually wallpaper over some tough realities rather than preaching that God is our companion in facing up to whatever our reality is and dealing with it.

Our faith is not about praying away our problems or fears and wishing it were otherwise. Our faith means we have experienced the love of God in Jesus Christ so that we never carry our burdens alone. God is our companion and guide and this parish Community, as with every Christian community, is called to be the sort of place where we carry each other's burdens and rest with each other awhile.

What we celebrate here each Sunday is that God will have the last word, a just, joyous, loving and peaceful word, in this world and when we enter our final rest.

Jesus didn't come to us as a divine magician, waving a wand over our problems to wipe away all our tears. Rather, he accompanies us so he can show us that the gift of peace and a release from our life's burdens is often found in having the perspective for exercising the gift of right judgment. Making the best possible choices leads to the alleviation of our pain and difficulties.

This type of spiritual sanity reminds me of the story of the nun who was teaching the communion class, and drew an analogy about how food is essential to life. She asked the class,

'What's small and furry and eats nuts?'

To which there was bemused silence.

So Sister tried again.

'What's small and furry and eats nuts?'

There was now stony silence. Sister then picked out Billy and asked him for the answer. After several awkward moments, Billy tentatively replied,

'Sister, I know the answer is supposed to be Jesus, because the answer to all your questions is always Jesus but, I have to tell you, it sounds like a bloody squirrel to me.'

Sometimes the answer is not simply 'Jesus'. As we all know, for some of our difficulties, there is no spiritual quick fix. There is no cheap grace. The answer is not simply Jesus.

In confronting issues, however, it is necessary for spiritual and mental health to take time out, to be as gentle with ourselves as possible, to know that the burden of life is shared so that we can make the decisions that will ease the situation.

I don't underestimate the burdens some of you have walked into this church with today. Whatever burden you may have brought with you, may you know a moment's rest, the companionship of fellow travellers and the gift of Christ's peace.

## **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Today, on this Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Sunday, we celebrate the gifts that indigenous people bring to the Catholic Church in Australia and the survival and strength of their culture and spirit.



### **We pray for the leaders of our church.**

May they joyfully follow in your footsteps with the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Lord hear us

### **For our nation, Australia, and our leaders.**

May the decisions of the leaders of all political parties be guided by compassion and acceptance of all peoples; may they be open to the Holy Spirit in their minds and hearts to make the right choices for all peoples. Lord hear us.

### **For those who suffer – especially our aboriginal & Torres Strait Islanders brothers and sisters.**

We pray for a compassionate response to the needs of others in ways that reveal your love and mercy, especially to those who are suffering. Lord hear us.

### **For all who dwell in this ancient land**

May we will show a renewed attitude of understanding and respect towards all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in order to foster God's peace and justice among all peoples. Lord, hear our prayer.

### **For all elders of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities,**

May they be sustained and renewed in their vision, wisdom and strength in order to nurture the young in their communities. Lord, hear our prayer.

### **For all our youth,**

May God will empower them with the gifts of his Spirit so that they will serve their present and future generations with enthusiasm and integrity. Lord, hear our prayer.

### **For those who have died recently and for those whose memory we hold sacred at this time.**

May they find rest with Christ in eternal life, and peace for ever. Lord hear us.

### **For the prayers we hold in our hearts (pause):**

Lord in your goodness hear our prayer.

We give you thanks, Father, for the gift of your Son who took up our burden and brought us to an eternal rest with him, with Christ Jesus and the Holy Spirit for ever and ever.

## **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

Our Father, who art in heaven.....

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,  
graciously grant peace in our days,  
that, by the help of your mercy,  
we may be always free from sin  
and safe from all distress,  
as we wait in hope for the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.  
For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and  
for ever.

May the Lord bless us, and keep us from all evil, and bring us  
to everlasting life.

Let us go in the peace of the Lord. Amen.

## SCRIPTURE COMMENTARY

by Brendan Byrne SJ

Today's **Gospel**, Matthew 11:25-30, features one of the most remarkable scenes in the Gospel of Matthew (the first part has a parallel in Luke 10:21-22). The disciple – and by extension ourselves – are given access to a moment of intimacy between Jesus and his Father. We 'overhear' a joyful exclamation that Jesus makes directly to the Father, rejoicing that he has communicated to 'mere children' (his disciples) some sense of the knowledge of the Father that he enjoys as divine Son. This privileged knowledge is not something that can be gained by learning or study; that is why the 'learned and clever' have no purchase upon it through their own efforts. It is something directly revealed by God's grace to those most capable of receiving it: 'mere children'.

The point about little children, of course, is that, being so unlearned and weak, they have nothing 'useful' to contribute in an adult world. All they can do is receive what is given to them. What they give in return is simply what they are really good at: affection and love. Jesus comes back again and again to this image of the child to communicate a sense of human relationship to God.

We should realise, too, that when Jesus speaks of 'knowing' God, he is using the word in the Semitic sense where, beyond intellectual knowledge, it has the deeper resonance of real experience. To 'know' a person is not simply to know a great deal *about* her or him: implied is a communion of love, entailing deep intimacy. This is the kind of knowledge of God of which Jesus is speaking. He blesses the Father because he has communicated such knowledge to the disciples – and, by extension, to ourselves, who are their heirs.

In the second part of the Gospel, Jesus issues an invitation: 'Come to me, all you who labour and are overburdened and I will give you rest. Shoulder my yoke and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart.' The invitation takes us to Matthew's characteristic presentation of Jesus as the One who bears and lifts humanity's burdens. The view of humanity depicted in the Gospel is that of being weighed down and burdened by a multitude of afflictions (4:23-25; 8:16-17; 9:35-36; 14:13-14). In the guise of the 'Servant' figure of Isaiah (12:15-21; see Isa 42:1-4; 49:1-6; 50:4-9; 52:13-53:12) Jesus comes to lift that burden, which includes but is by no means exhausted by the burden of sin. He rails at the scribes and Pharisees because, in their interpretation of the Torah (the Jewish law), they make human life more rather than less burdensome: 'They tie up heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on the shoulders of others; but they themselves are unwilling to lift a finger to move them' (23:4). For Jesus, on the other hand, the cardinal rule for interpreting the law is the divine intent made clear in Hosea 6:6: 'What I (God) want is mercy not sacrifice' (see Matt 9:13; 12:7). For Jesus, God did not give the law to Israel to impose or add to the burdens of the human race but rather to regulate a way of life worthy of a people chosen by God. It is in the context of being an interpreter of the Torah in this sense that Jesus claims that *his* yoke is easy and *his* burden light.

The heart of that 'ease' and 'lightness', however, is the 'knowledge' of which he spoke earlier. To those who do not really know God or who worship God as a distant and threatening potentate, religious and ethical norms promulgated in God's name will indeed appear burdensome. To those who have allowed Jesus to draw them into his intimacy and knowledge of God they will not appear this way. The values they enshrine and seek to foster will already be encased in the heart.

The **First Reading**, Zechariah 9:9-10, interpreted in a messianic sense (as when cited in connection with the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem [Matt 21:5]), proclaims the kind of Messiah that Jesus in fact turns out to be not a conquering ruler armed with the weapons of the world but the compassionate, burden-bearing figure emerging from the Gospel.

Interpretation of the **Second Reading** (Romans 8:9, 11-13) is beset by the difficulty of rendering Paul's sense of living 'according to the flesh', here translated as 'the unspiritual', which rather begs the question. 'Flesh' for Paul denotes human existence in the era before Christ, ruled by selfishness and sin. 'Spirit' denotes the life of the new creation, pulsating with Christ's unselfish love. It is this Spirit that has – or ought to have – 'made his home' within believers, setting their bodies on track to share Christ's resurrection.

## Remember In Our Prayers

**Baptism:** Lucas Pinzone

**Illness:** Kuldip Ahluwalia, Kerry Basham, Anne de Rebello, June Dobbs, Barbara Gallo, Antony LaRive, Tatiana Mansel, Gabrielle Marylees, George McLean, Freddy McGuigan, Margaret McGrath, Kevin Nichollis, David Quinn, Catherine Ryan, Giovanni Sabato, Edward Shelley, Rob Smith, Emily Somers, Brian Taylor, Barbara Turner, Robin Turner

**Recently Deceased:** David Quin

**Anniversaries:** John Corcoran

## Mass Bookings

Please continue to book places for weekend Masses through TryBooking or by contacting the parish office. Mass bookings will be open online from 1pm this Saturday and end at 3pm on the day before the Mass next weekend. Several additional places are available for volunteers at the Masses. To volunteer please email Carole at [Carole.cheng@cam.org.au](mailto:Carole.cheng@cam.org.au)

★ To save space for people unable to book online please only book a weekend Mass every fortnight.

**Click or input the link for St James Masses**

<https://www.trybooking.com/BJPUC>

**Click or input the link for St Joan of Arc Masses**

<https://www.trybooking.com/BJPUK>

## Working With Children & Young People



Dear parishioners, the child safety mailing to volunteers has now taken place.

We fully appreciate that these compliance measures may be cumbersome so please contact us if we can assist you in any way. Many thanks to those who have returned the signed Declaration already. If you are a volunteer and didn't receive the mailing please let us know.

## History of St James

We are seeking support from interested parishioners to continue the work of Diana Cole, the former historian of St James.

All parishioners are encouraged to submit any material in their possession to assist us with continuation of this work.

St James began as the Brighton Mission in 1861, followed later by parish, church and school. Many changes have occurred over that time.

Initial enquiries to John Taylor would be appreciated (0418 393 929) or email [inchland@ozemail.com.au](mailto:inchland@ozemail.com.au)

## Supporting Education of Aboriginal Children



Opening the Doors Foundation is an Aboriginal-led community organisation supporting the education of Aboriginal children. It covers the extra costs associated with schooling including books, school uniforms, computers, school camps and other costs. Launched in 2001 by Archbishop Denis Hart, it has now supported over 800 students. The Foundation is based in Thornbury. The Foundation believes that education and consistent support are key to enable the next generation to realise their dreams. Donations to the Foundation are tax deductible.

To make a tax deductible donation online for the Opening The Doors Foundation, go to their website:-

[www.openingthedoors.org.au](http://www.openingthedoors.org.au)

and press the Donate button. Many thanks.

## St Vincent de Paul WINTER APPEAL

**835,000** - That's how many people have lost their jobs since March!

### We Need Your Financial Help

- **Phone by calling 13 18 12 using a credit card.**  
PLEASE allocate your donations to either **St James or St Joan of Arc**. Receipts will be issued by the Fundraising Team.
- **Online at [vinnies.org.au](http://vinnies.org.au)**  
PLEASE complete in the "Comments" field by allocating your donations to either **St James or St Joan of Arc**.  
Receipts will be automatically emailed to donors

**Donations of \$2 or more are tax-deductible.**

**[Winter Pantry Appeal](#)**

***We need non-perishable food donations to continually add to our St James storeroom/pantry***

- **Tea/coffee/Milo/Longlife milk** – small to medium packets preferred
- **Cans:** soups, stews, beans, spaghetti, ham, spam, tuna, salmon, vegetables, tomatoes, fruit
- **Dry Food:** Pasta, rice, weet-bix, rolled oats

*(NB. Check the use-by dates on food items before donating)*

**Please place your donations at St James Church in the Vinnies baskets at the entrance door.** We will deliver this food to families in need in our local communities.

***"Let us do whatever good lies in our hands"***



## New Stole Purchased For the Parishes

Details of the beautiful design are included on the Certificate issued by the Aboriginal Catholic Ministry.



CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE  
OF MELBOURNE



## Certificate of Authenticity

This certificate is issued by the Aboriginal Catholic Ministry for Victoria, 2016.

Article	Red Stole
Medium	Acrylic on material
Artist	Melissa Brickell Yorta Yorta Wiradjeri
Title	The Pentecost or The Passover

Story: The apostles [12 trees] faithfully [bright green uplifted branches] share a meal of unleavened bread [is broken] together; except for one [tree blackened and bent branches] he who dips his hand into the river [cup of water]; and therein the blood flows into the coolamon; and the Holy Spirit [wings of eagle] descends amidst the dust, smoke and rush of winds] upon them all.

“... He took the cup and gave thanks.  
He took the bread and gave thanks  
... one of you will betray me...  
... thy will be done...”

Readings	Acts 2: 1-4 Matthew 26:17-19 Mark 14: 12-24 Luke 22:8-15 John 6:1-15
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## Sherry Balcombe's Reflection on The BLM March Manager Aboriginal Catholic Ministry Victoria

When I heard the news of the killing of George Floyd's killing I was really sad, but not the least surprised.

Now I am actually hopeful that something will be done to stop the ingrained racism in this country. Most Australians are still blind to it.

I see Aboriginal Deaths all the time in the Koorie Mail and the Indigenous Times, as well as on the news on Facebook. We as a community share the information in the hope that the wider community will see what we see, and demand that things change.

The racism in this country is a disgrace and unless you've experienced it then you just don't understand what it is like to be an Aboriginal. I remember when I went to NZ I was shocked at how respected and acknowledged the Maori people were, truly shocked and ashamed that my people are treated so badly here.

My people have been fighting oppression for far too long. If you are angry about the treatment of Black people in the USA then you should be angry, very angry, about the treatment of Aboriginal people in your own country.

In the 1950's my father, Valentine Moloney, was a guest in Communist countries. He promoted Aboriginal human rights. His comments on returning were "I am No longer an Aborigine. I am now a Communist. It is the first time in my life (early 30's) that I have been treated with dignity and all my fellow Aboriginal Brothers and Sisters deserve the same".

Are we treated with dignity?

Are we treated with respect?

We have to be tougher, more vigilant, second thinking about everything, always on time or else we are judged. This is a fact. I have faced racism throughout my life from early primary school. My children have all faced racism head on, in schools and workplaces just because they identify and are proud. They have called out racism as I have done. I am proud that they have.

For me the judging is not for being black, but for not being black enough! I am constantly questioned on the percentage of Aboriginal I have. I can be judged as being not 'Really Aboriginal'!!! We as Aborigines must be more diligent, more punctual, more professional ... because we are not judged like everyone else. There is a double standard in this country.

There was a push from media and government for the protest march to stop. The media used scare tactics, warnings that it was going to be a violent protest. I think is like trying to incite violence.

When is a good time? In three months? In two years when this is all over? When everyone has forgotten about George Floyd and gone back to their "Normal lives"?

We have waited so long for Justice and now is the time to stand up with our Brothers and Sisters in Australia and from around the world and say racism is not acceptable, racism is ugly, every person should be treated with dignity and respect irrespective of their skin colour.

There have been 432 Aboriginal Deaths In Custody since 1991. There have been no convictions. Now that does not count the ones that did not die!!! There was an inquiry into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody 30 years ago. We wait for the recommendations to be implemented. We are the most incarcerated race of people on this planet.

The voices of those who are mistreated in the criminal system are rarely heard. The voiceless are too scared to complain against police or too powerless to fight back.

These are just my thoughts and reflections.

I long to see a new Australia that prides itself on the treatment of First Nations Peoples, that reveres the cultural heritage of this land; where every child who goes to school learns about the First Nations people as they Guardians and protectors of Mother Earth.

I am longing for our next generations to learn how we lived off the land and respected and cared for it like our Mother. How we had over 500 Aboriginal Nations in every inch of this Great South Land and how we survived 2 ice ages and mega fauna to be the longest continuous race on the face of this planet earth.

When this happens, we will have the world that God really wants.

I watched in shock and disbelief as Americans rioted across their country. Such was their horror that they drew a line in the sand and said 'NO More'!!

We know what it is like to face racism every day, to fear for our children just because of the colour of our skin. We First Nations Peoples were groaning and people's hearts were hurting because we know how black people feel. There are many, many examples of the suffering caused by racism. I need look no further than in my immediate family. Here in Australia the murmuring about Black Lives was getting louder, there was starting to be a rumble, about #Black Deaths In Custody.

We protest here in Australia, we march here in Australia, but no one hears us. Our message is always ignored or brushed under the carpet. Now we fear that people will say 'Yes it's sad but what can we do? It is in America it's not here'.

Guess what ... it is here, it has always been here ... and it is not going anywhere, not unless we stand up to it.

I had no intention of going to the protest march. We have been isolating since February and I am scared of the coronavirus, but my children insisted. They made posters and they showed their passion. How could I not go? How could I not stand up for my family, for my grandchildren, and denounce the blatant racism in this country? It is now or never!

We wore gloves, we had face masks. What will be will be. This is about Solidarity. This is about dignity. This is about being human and being hurt by bigotry and racism.

We were told that we have disrespected Australia by doing this but what about Us?

When is a good time? When will it be OK? Two months or two years' time?

So as we drove up Victoria Parade toward the Exhibition Gardens I was overcome with emotion and I cried.

Do you know how many times I have joined the NAIDOC march and been heckled from the footpaths? How many times we have marched for our rights and been ignored? Hundreds.

And now the streets were packed there were thousands of people there to march in solidarity with us. It was so incredibly heartening. Australia is growing.

The only time I have felt this atmosphere was in Sydney in the 1988 march on Australia Day.

But this time was different, very different. It was predominately young people under the age of 30. They get it, they do see it.

I have much hope for the future; not for my generation it is too late for us. But the next generation will hopefully stamp out this systemic racism that is so much part of Australia's fabric. They will change things for the better and this world.

It will be a better place for my Grandchildren. They will not be judged by their skin colour, they will be a gift to their country and they will walk in two worlds and they will share their culture with the world. They will do it with dignity. That is what this is about it is about, having dignity, being proud of your race not being discriminated against because you are Aboriginal.

As Martin Luther King said, "I have a Dream". Will you join me on this journey? Will you teach your children about the oldest, longest continuous culture on this planet? Will you teach them that we must take responsibility for this land as the Creator God intended?

Will you teach them that our culture is so rich that it has endured incredible obstacles: genocide, stolen generations, black deaths in custody and more?

Will you help to make the dream a reality?

Educate yourself. Knowledge is power. Join us on the journey of Truth telling about this country Australia.